

## **Language is learned naturally**

CLIL not only provides the context for learning, but it does so naturally and in a way that mimics how we learn our first language as kids.

It's important to be reminded that when kindergarten students arrive for the very first day of school, they're already fluent in their first language. They can communicate with each other, and can tell the teacher what is wrong or what it is they want.

This competence was acquired sans any grammar lesson.

In CLIL, there are hardly any grammar lessons. It doesn't concern itself with surface forms like sentence structure or verb conjugation. Proper observance of rules come far second to the comprehension of language.

That's just how we learned as children. That's why there are plenty of native speakers who have a hard time explaining the rules of grammar of their native tongue, because they didn't learn it that way. They acquired their language in the normal course of life, interacting with mom and dad, listening as adults talk to each other, watching cartoons. It was not formalized training; it was a very practical socialization.

## **Language is innately tied to motivation**

The importance of motivation in language acquisition has already been established in study after study.

What is great about a CLIL class is that it efficiently uses students' innate motivation for the subject matter (like history, chemistry or math) and indirectly channels it to a target language. Because subject matter and medium of instruction are inseparable and intertwined, the target language ultimately benefits from the natural interest a student has for the topic.

For example, a student who is incredibly interested in the Spanish painter Pablo Picasso might take an entire course about him, in Spanish. Although learning about Picasso is his ultimate driving force, learning the Spanish language becomes a desirable collateral damage to this passion. Not too bad, right?

In a way, CLIL starts with the student's passion and uses that to fuel learning. Again, students won't be asking, "Why am I studying this? Where will I use this?" They will have already answered those questions for themselves.